

KOKKODA YOUTH FOUNDATION

Changing Lives

ANNUAL REPORT



October 2019 - December 2020





CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

When this all started in 2004, who would have thought that I would be doing my last report as Chairman in 2021, in what feels like the blink of an eye. In concluding my reign as Chairman of this amazing charity, it would be remiss of me to not go back to the start.

The notion of helping young people and holding insanely tough endurance events manifested when I attended an RSL conference and listed to a guest speaker detail the story of Kokoda and the significance of our soldiers battles on the Kokoda track in 1942. I felt so ashamed of my ignorance but also amazed at what these men achieved felt so compelled that this story had to be told. The fact that these soldiers where the men from all walks of life and the inspiration they provided by working together, persevering, enduring and displaying incredible courage and for some of them the ultimate sacrifice.

The other defining moment in the creation of the Kokoda Youth Foundation was hearing the stories in the media about what all the 'rotten young kids' of today where doing. I certainly did not subscribe to this notion and thought that there had to be more positive stories and more opportunities for young people to show what they are capable of. I realised that if we could just combine the two – that Kokoda was an inspiring story for young people to use as the provision for change and help provide an optimistic future for our young people and the community.

On returning to the Gold Coast, my wife Anna and I come up with a youth program that we believed would give young people valuable life skills, by training them to walk in the footsteps of our heroes on the Kokoda Track in PNG. Of course this needed to be funded and we also came up with the idea of a team fundraising event – aptly named The Kokoda Challenge.

There are so many individuals and organisations that have supported the Foundation over the last 17 years. It would be impossible to mention them all but there are a few that I must acknowledge. First and foremost, my wife Anna, who has been beside me for all the ups and downs and has sacrificed more than you'll ever understand for the progress of the Foundation.

This Foundation could not be where it is today without the Gold Coast Bushwalkers Club. The 2004 President, Robyn Cox, and member, Geoff Hamilton, where the driving force in creating the Kokoda Challenge route and providing all the support and logistics required. Sadly, Geoff recently passed away and it is with great respect that I acknowledge his life long membership of the Kokoda Challenge Association.

The help of the so many local services and organisations in our founding years was immeasurable. The SES in the first 3 years was vital and enabled the event to grow considerably. The Queensland Police Service, Gold Coast City Council, SEQ Water, Queensland Parks and Wildlife and so many community groups and suppliers have been instrumental to our Events.

The most important group of people over all the years are our Volunteer Leaders in the Kokoda Challenge Youth Program. Without their invaluable time, we could not have provided the life changing opportunity to over 560 Kokoda Kids. If our Foundation had to employ paid professionals to perform these roles, we could not have assisted as many young people. I know that the rewards these leaders would have received from working with these young people are extraordinary, but the time and sacrifice each and every leader has given to the Foundation is what truly enables our charity to exist.

To highlight the legacy the KCYP creates is the incredible past Kokoda Kids who has have come back as volunteer leaders themselves. A special thanks to James, Kris, Airlie, Carmen, Jack, Braedyn, Shane, Ronnie and Monique. And last but not least, our original Kokoda kids Sophie and Shane who sit on the Board as Directors.

A massive thank you for the Kokoda Challenge Association members who predominately are the parents of past Kokoda Kids - Karen, Kym, Sharon, Leigh, Barney, Joy, Greg, Ted, John (to name just a few), your support and assistance to all that we do over a number of years is just immeasurable and I am so personally appreciative.

I would also like to mention the employees who have graced the many positions of staff over 17 years. We have had so many amazing contributors over the 17 years and they all give so much more than they are ever remunerated. I must pay mention to our first employee, Johllene Elson, who is now back at the Kokoda Youth Foundation and I am at peace with leaving the Foundation with her at the helm.

Over the 17 years the Foundation has grown from a single youth program and fundraising event to multiple youth programs with inter-state Kokoda Challenge events and the addition of an entire Outdoor Education department providing sustainable income at the hands of our experienced and capable Director, Laura skinner.

2020 has not been the year I hoped I would leave the Chair of the Foundation on but 2021 is shaping to look like a re-birth of the Kokoda Youth Foundation and I am extremely optimistic for our future.

I am handing the position of Chair over to Lynley Mangin, who has been an amazing supporter of the Kokoda Youth Foundation – competing in 13 Kokoda Challenge events and leading our Kokoda Kids in the KCYP over 8 years. Her experience and knowledge of our organisation is incredible and I am confident that the Kokoda Youth Foundation is in great hands.

Live the Kokoda Spirit,



Doug Henderson



***To laugh often and much;
to win the respect of intelligent
people and the affection of
children;
to earn the appreciation of
honest critics and endure the
betrayal of false friends;
to appreciate the beauty;
to find the best in others;
to leave the world a bit better,
whether by a healthy child, a
garden patch or a redeemed
social condition;
to know even one life has
breathed easier because you
have lived.
This is to have succeeded!"***
Ralph Waldo Emerson



OVERVIEW OF 2020 OPERATIONS

2020 was a challenging year for The Kokoda Youth Foundation, and indeed the world, with the Covid-19 pandemic affecting our operations heavily.

In March 2020, the Board of the Kokoda Youth Foundation made the difficult decision to cancel all events and youth programs for 2020 to ensure our survival beyond the pandemic.

All registrations fees were returned to competitors in our events and our Camp Kokoda bookings were cancelled for 7 months as well, rendering nil income to the Foundation for the majority of the year.

The KYF was forced to re-invent the wheel, hosting a 'Virtual Kokoda Challenge' in May and supporting the 2019 Kokoda Kids to do their community service individually. The Virtual Kokoda Challenge raised over \$17,000 for the Foundation and demonstrated the strong support we have amongst the Kokoda community.

This support was encapsulated when a young 17 year old LORDS student, Sam Barham, decided he would walk 96km through his local neighbourhood to raise funds for the Kokoda Youth Foundation.

Whilst on the surface it may have seemed like there was little to do without events or youth programs, however the few staff remaining at Head Office and Camp Kokoda were busy reviewing procedures and processes, updating our websites and software, seeking grants, maintaining our social media presence and preparing for a bumper 2021.

Several grants were secured during the year including \$34,900 from the Gaming Community Benefit Fund for a new Campsite at Camp Kokoda.

During this down time the Board of the Kokoda Youth Foundation took the opportunity to evaluate and look inwardly at the Foundation, holding a Strategic Planning Forum in October. The forum analysed what the KYF stands for, what it represents and the future it can have with good governance, a committed board, dedicated Foundation members, a passionate CEO and enthusiastic staff.

New ventures were made with the expansion to a second outdoor Education facility, Kokoda Park. The KYF is in a generous lease arrangement with the owners of the property which has allowed our Outdoor Education department to expand services with exclusive use of this centre based facility, allowing sequential programming to existing client with very limited financial risk.

Camp Kokoda re-opened for school camps in September with strict Covid– safe measures in place. It was certainly a hectic return but the sounds of young people enjoying our facilities was music to everyone's ears.

A new website was launched for our Outdoor Education departments showcasing both facilities and enabling school students and staff to complete all their medical and camp registration details online.

Our Outdoor Education Director, Laura Skinner, commenced maternity leave in December after welcoming a new daughter, Hannah, into the world.

As the year progressed and Covid restriction were lifted the Kokoda Youth Foundation engaged with Southport Flexible Learning Centre to offer a new youth program which was piloted in term 4 , the Kokoda Pathways Program. The pilot was a great opportunity to understand the need for a program that focuses on employment skills for young people and help better prepare them for life post secondary education.

Our 2019 Kokoda Kids graduated in October after a lengthy Covid delays in the community service component of KCYP. It was great to be celebrate the achievements of these young people and their leaders in style at Royal Pines Resort.

New staff were employed towards the end of 2020, with Tiffani Seaton (a 2015 Kokdoea Kid) joining the team as Reception and Event Liaison Officer in October and marking the pathway of the return to normal.

2020 may have been a quieter year for the Kokoda Youth Foundation but it was time well spent preparing for a massive return in 2021 for all departments of the Kokoda Youth Foundation— Youth Programs, Kokoda Challenge Events and Outdoor Education.



FINANCIAL SYNOPSIS

The audited financial report for the 2020 year covers a 15 month period from 1 October, 2019 to 31st December, 2020. It does report a loss of \$209, 803 which is significant.

It is worthy to note that the 3 months of 1 October—31 December 2019 ran at a loss of \$233,000 and the actual calendar year of 2020, did make a small profit which shows much promise for 2021 being a return to more prosperous times.

The operations at Camp Kokoda reported a profit of \$33, 195 for the 15 month period, showing once again that the early years of investments are starting to prove their returns.

The Kokoda Youth Foundation’s total asset position as at 31st December, 2019 was at \$3,108, 710 which was an increase of \$75 456 on the previous year.

Full auditors details are attached and the table below summarises income and expenses over the reporting period.

	2020
Camp Kokoda Income	\$ 494,029.00
Camp Kokoda - contract labour hire	\$ 1,760.00
Donations	\$ 172,475.00
Registrations	\$ 41,974.00
Corporate Events	\$ 817.00
Sponsorship	\$ 4,545.00
Grant	\$ 63,365.00
JobKeeper/Cash Boost	\$ 302,800.00
Other	\$ 102,558.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 1,184,323.00
Expenses	\$ 636,926.00
Youth Program Expenses	\$ 138,557.00
Camp Kokoda Expenses	\$ 618,644.00
Isurava Expense	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,394,127.00
KYF Profit (Loss)	-\$ (209,803.00)

